

**DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CRIMINOLOGY**  
**CRIJ 7371**  
**RACE AND CRIME**  
**Spring 2018**

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Professor: Dr. Melinda Tasca  
Office: CJC C225  
Phone: 936-294-1643  
Email: mtasca@shsu.edu  
Class Time: Fridays, 9:00am – 11:50am  
Classroom: CJC A213  
Office Hours: Fridays, 12:30pm – 3:30pm

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course examines the intersection of race/ethnicity, crime, and justice in the United States. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, it will cover theoretical, empirical, and substantive issues underlying the causes and consequences of inequality. Particular attention will be paid to the socio-historical construction of race/ethnicity, crime patterns, segregation and racial structure, intergenerational inequality, intersectionality, and disparities in criminal justice processing and punishment. The course will also delve into scholarly debates surrounding the study of these issues. The overarching goal of this seminar is to lay the groundwork for students to understand and critically assess the complex relationships between race and criminal justice outcomes.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

There are three primary objectives for this course:

1. Understand how race/ethnicity is constructed and the role of race in American society and public policy.
2. Critically examine theoretical and empirical approaches taken in research on race/ethnicity, crime, and criminal justice processing.
3. Identify gaps in knowledge on race, crime, and justice and develop directions for future research.

**COURSE MATERIALS:**

Books (in order of course schedule):

Wilson, W. J. (2012). *The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy*. University of Chicago Press.

Massey, D. S., & Denton, N. A. (1993). *American apartheid: Segregation and the making of the underclass*. Harvard University Press.

Jones, N. (2009). *Between good and ghetto: African American girls and inner-city violence*. Rutgers University Press.

Glaser, J. (2014). *Suspect race: Causes and consequences of racial profiling*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Zatz, M.S. & Rodriguez, N. (2015). *Dreams and nightmares: Immigration policy, youth, and families*. University of California Press.

McCorkel, J.A. (2013). *Breaking women: Gender, race, and the new politics of imprisonment*. New York University Press.

Tonry, M. (2011). *Punishing race: A continuing American dilemma*. Oxford University Press.

#### Articles (in order of course schedule):

Blumer, H. (1958). Race Prejudice as a Sense of Group Position. *The Pacific Sociological Review*, 1, 3-7.

King, R. D., & Wheelock, D. (2007). Group threat and social control: Race, perceptions of minorities and the desire to punish. *Social Forces*, 85, 1255-1280.

Zatz, M. S., & Rodriguez, N. (2006). Conceptualizing race and ethnicity in studies of crime and criminal justice. *The many colors of crime*. New York University Press, New York, 39-53.

Rosenfeld, R. (2016). *Documenting and explaining the 2015 homicide rise: Research directions* (NCJ 249895). U.S. Department of Justice: Washington, DC.

Executive Office of the President (2014). *Native youth report*. The White House: Washington, DC.

Walsh, A. & Yun, I. (In Press). Examining the race, poverty, and crime nexus adding Asian Americans and biosocial processes. *Journal of Criminal Justice*.

Burt, C.H. (2017). This again? Homogenizing racism, dismissing structure, and adding biology: A response to Walsh & Yun. Retrieved from <https://calliehburt.wordpress.com/blog/>.

Barnes, J.C. (In Press). A constructivist view of race in modern criminology. *Journal of Criminal Justice*.

#### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:**

##### Reading:

As graduate students, I expect you to come prepared to every class session. Note: Books are available from the SHSU bookstore and other online vendors while all other readings are posted in BlackBoard.

Your grade in this course will be determined by a variety of assignments including:

1. Class Participation: 25 points
  2. Discussion and Reading Questions: 30 points (12 class sessions x 2.5 points each)
  3. Grant Proposal: 45 points
- Total: 100 points available

#### Class Participation:

You will receive one grade for your overall participation and effort, which includes your class preparedness and attendance. Taking the time to carefully read and think about these readings will be essential to your success in this course. *You should come ready to discuss key points from the readings and to critically assess their strengths and limitations as well as suggest ways to build upon prior research.* I strongly encourage students to bring reading notes to class as referring to them will be helpful as we engage in a critical dialogue about research and policy regarding race, crime, and justice. I expect everyone to meaningfully contribute to the discussion each class meeting.

#### Discussion and Research Questions:

**Students are required to submit discussion and research questions in advance of every class session beginning Week 2 (i.e. Word document submitted via BlackBoard on Thursdays by 5pm).** *Students should include 5 discussion questions* prompted from the designated readings that aim to stimulate interesting discussion among the group. These questions should be primarily research-focused, although I also welcome policy-oriented discussion. I will use these questions, along with my own, to initiate the conversation but expect that students will raise questions themselves too. It is important that we have engaging and thoughtful discussions during every class session. In addition to discussion questions, *students will submit 2 research questions as well.* Research questions should be designed to advance this body of work if empirically tested. As such, these questions must include clear outcomes and key independent variable(s) along with a brief statement on why these questions are important to examine. These weekly assignments will help students evaluate existing scholarship, identify gaps in prior work, and develop sound research questions. These are invaluable skills that I want to see each of you further develop.

#### Grant Proposal:

For a final assignment in this course, each student will write a condensed research grant proposal. Developing theoretically and empirically sound research is essential in our line of work. Obtaining grant funding is also a highly valued professional skill. Therefore, the main goals of this project are to contribute to your professional development in both of these areas while improving your substantive knowledge base. Students in a previous semester carried out their proposed research and turned it into a publication (I encourage you to think about doing the same).

For this assignment, you will respond to a (slightly modified) internal grant solicitation released annually by SHSU. Most universities offer support to young faculty through the form of competitively awarded internal grants. Gaining experience writing grants—this type in particular—can be useful as you approach the start of your careers. Note: The formal instructions and application for the Faculty Research Grant are available in BlackBoard. Budgets and IRB applications are NOT required for this assignment. Proposals should be 7-8 single-spaced pages using APA format. We will discuss other requirements in greater depth in class over the course of the semester.

You may write a proposal addressing any topic related to race, crime, and justice. On **3/9 by 5pm**, each student will submit a document that includes the following (1 page maximum): 1) Research question(s); 2) Brief discussion of the theoretical framework/rationale for the proposed study; and 3) Sketch of the proposed data and methodological strategy. I understand that there will be tweaks to this plan, but it is important to have a roadmap drawn out early for the execution of this project. I will provide feedback following this submission and I expect to be kept in the loop on the status of the project as the semester progresses.

On **4/13 by 5pm**, a completed draft of the grant proposal is due. I will provide students with feedback during scheduled face-to-face meetings (TBA). A final proposal is due on **Wednesday 5/2 by 5pm**.

**\*\*ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED THROUGH BLACKBOARD\*\***

### **IMPORTANT POLICY INFORMATION:**

#### Late Policy:

*Unless approved by me in advance for extenuating circumstances*, late submissions of assignments will not be accepted. As graduate students, it is your responsibility to meet deadlines and to plan accordingly.

#### Academic Honesty:

The academic community operates on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play. Occasionally, this trust is violated when academic dishonesty occurs, either inadvertently or deliberately. Academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated and is regarded as a VERY serious matter. You assume full responsibility for the content and integrity of the academic work you submit. The guiding principle of academic integrity shall be that your submitted work, examinations, reports, and projects must be your own work. Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized material, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; copying or allowing someone to copy any portion of a required assignment; turning in work previously completed for another course
- Fabrication: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise
- Plagiarism: knowingly copying any portion of another's work without proper citation (this includes paraphrasing or summarizing others' work without citing them)
- Interference: changing, stealing, impeding, or destroying another student's work
- Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of the academic code

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited

to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

#### Disability Accommodation:

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with SHSU Counseling and Disability Services and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with Counseling and Disability Services.

SSD Office Location: Lee Drain Annex (next to the Farrington Building)

Telephone: 936-294-3512

TDD: 936-294-3786

E-mail: [disability@shsu.edu](mailto:disability@shsu.edu)

Web Address: [http://www.shsu.edu/services/counseling\\_disability\\_services.html](http://www.shsu.edu/services/counseling_disability_services.html)

#### Student Absences on Religious Holy Days:

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: “a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20....” A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

#### Cellphone and Electronic Device Policy:

The use by students of electronic devices is prohibited. Laptops may be used for the purpose of note taking only. Arrangements for handling potential emergency situations may be granted at my discretion. Failure to comply with this policy could result in expulsion from the classroom or with multiple offenses, failure of the course.

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/aps/aps-students.html>

### COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: 1/19	<u>Course Overview and Expectations</u>  <u>The Socio-Historical Construction of Race</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blumer (1958)</li> <li>• King &amp; Wheelock (2007)</li> <li>• Zatz &amp; Rodriguez (2006)</li> </ul>
Week 2: 1/26	<u>Urban Poverty, Segregation and Racial Structure</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilson (2012): Chapters 1 – 4</li> </ul> <p><b>Due:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Weekly submission of discussion/research questions begins this week (due Thursdays at 5pm)</b></li> </ul>
Week 3: 2/2	<u>Urban Poverty, Segregation and Racial Structure</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilson (2012): Chapters 5 – 7 &amp; Afterword</li> </ul>
Week 4: 2/9	<u>Urban Poverty, Segregation and Racial Structure</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Massey &amp; Denton (1998): Chapters 1 – 4</li> </ul>
Week 5: 2/16	ACJS ANNUAL MEETING (NO CLASS)
Week 6: 2/23	<u>Urban Poverty, Segregation and Racial Structure</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Massey &amp; Denton (1998): Chapters 5 – 8</li> </ul> <u>Crime Trends in the Study of Race &amp; Crime</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rosenfeld (2016)</li> </ul>
Week 7: 3/2	<u>Intergenerational Racial Inequality and Intersectionality</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jones (2010): Intro, Chapters 1 – 4 &amp; Conclusion</li> <li>• White House Native Youth Report (2014)</li> </ul>
Week 8: 3/9	<u>Disparities in Criminal Justice Processing &amp; Punishment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glaser (2015): Chapters 1 – 4</li> </ul> <p><b>Due by 5pm:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Grant Proposal Outline: 1) Research question(s); 2) Theoretical framework/rationale; 3) Data and methodological strategy.</b></li> </ul>

Week 9: 3/16	SPRING BREAK (NO CLASS)
Week 10: 3/23	<u>Disparities in Criminal Justice Processing &amp; Punishment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glaser (2015): Chapters 5 – 8</li> </ul>
Week 11: 3/30	UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY - GOOD FRIDAY (NO CLASS)
Week 12: 4/6	<u>Disparities in Criminal Justice Processing &amp; Punishment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zatz &amp; Rodriguez (2015): Chapters 1 – 6</li> </ul>
Week 13: 4/13	<u>Disparities in Criminal Justice Processing &amp; Punishment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>McCorkel (2013): Intro, Chapters 1 – 4</li> </ul> <p><b>Due by 5pm:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Draft of grant proposal</b></li> <li><b>Schedule one-on-one meetings to discuss draft</b></li> </ul>
Week 14: 4/20	<u>Disparities in Criminal Justice Processing &amp; Punishment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>McCorkel (2013): Chapters 5 – 7 &amp; Conclusion</li> </ul>
Week 15: 4/27	<u>Disparities in Criminal Justice Processing &amp; Punishment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tonry (2011): Chapters 1 – 6</li> </ul>
Week 16: 5/4	<u>Current Debates in Research on Race, Crime, &amp; Justice</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walsh &amp; Yun (In Press)</li> <li>Burt (Blog response to Walsh &amp; Yun)</li> <li>Barnes (2017)</li> </ul> <p><b>Due <u>Wednesday 5/2</u> by 5pm:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Final grant proposal</b></li> </ul>
Week 17: 5/11	NO CLASS MEETING (NO FINAL EXAM REQUIRED)